ENGLISH DEBATERS.

BRIEF NOTES ON MR. CHAMBERLAIN, MR. GLADSTONE, MR BALFOUR, SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT, AND MR. JOHN MORLEY.

London, August 8.

Mr. Chamberlain's allusion to Herod gave, as you know, great offence to the good Gladstonians. It has been explained that he did not liken Mr. Gladstone to Herod, but of what use are explanations when people are bent on clinging to their own perversities? He mentioned the two personages in the same sentence—is not that enough? He likened the followers of Mr. Gladstone to the followers of Herod—do you suppose the followers of Mr. Gladstone will forgive him, or will ever cease to repeat the false accusation they think they have fastened on an opponent whom they detest? The same men were indignant because it was said that Mr. Gladstone had compared the Freemasons to the Liberator Building Society. He mentioned them in the same sentence, and he certainly used the bankrupt and fraudulent society as an illustration to explain his attitude of contempt toward the Freemasons. But Mr. Gladstone may steal a horse, while Mr. Chamberlain may not look over a hedge. I use so homely an adage with much diffidence, and I dare say I shall be told I have accused Mr. Gladstone of horsestealing.

It is the less wonderful that Mr. Chamberlain's allusion should have given offence, since any form or expression of intellectual dissent from any view held by their great leader for the moment gives offence. When Mr. Gladstone thought the Irish members ought to be excluded from Westminster, it was held an offence to think they ought to be retained. When, a little later, he thought they ought to be retained, it was held an offence to think or say that they ought to be excluded. It was, in the view of the idolater, "insolence" to differ from the idol, or to argue the other side. Their attitude to him was his to the Irish Nationalists; entirely governed by the spirit of perfect trust. It was the "angelic theory" in a different and more strictly personal form. How can you doubt his perfect goodness and perfect wisdom?

The attitude is distinctly feminine. It is characteristic of the feminine politician to regard political criticism as personal. If you expose a fallacy you impute a moral dereliction. If you point out an inconsistency you "abuse Mr. Gladstone." If you prove that a particular clause of the Home Rule bill is unworkable, you have no respect for age and past services. If you hint a doubt whether it is worth while to break up an empire to gratify an old man's whim, you accuse him of immorality, and you suggest that he ought to be lynched when you regret to see him coercing the House of Commons by the gag and the guillotine. Such are some of the results of applying the intuitive methods of the superior sex to practical politics. I do not doubt that the methods as well as the sex are superior, but they do not quite suit the prevailing forms of political activity; probably because the prevailing forms were settled by mere men, who never thought of looking for a personal affront in an argumentative treatment of questions which are entirely impersonal and of public import.

Mr. Chamberlain's offences have been, from this point of view, innumerable. He has led the Opposition during this brief Parliamentary contest over the Home Rule bill—brief when you consider the magnitude of the constitutional changes involved. He has in him more of the spirit of continual combat than Mr. Balfour has. When Mr. Balfour is roused nobody is more belligerent, no one has more courage, no one leads better or speaks better, or is more damaging to the enemy. But it must be admitted he often requires to be roused. Mr. Chamberlain wants no spur. He delights in battle for the sake of the battle as well as of the cause. He is always ready, always armed, always at his best. No man excels him in debate except Mr. Gladstone himself, and Mr. Gladstone's superiority includes other things than debate.

For Mr. Gladstone's range of vision and elevation of tone are what they have ever been. No one who has heard him this session, no one who has read him, no one who has but so much as seen him and noted his still unchanged stateliness of demeanor, would suspect the existence of that moral deterioration which, as I have before said, some of his most ardent followers now discover in their revered leader. His authority over the House is what it was,—I mean not over his own party merely, but over the whole House. Neither opponents nor friends can resist the spell he lays upon them. He is often sophistical—perhaps always—and sometimes insincere, for how is it possible to take in such quick succession such a vast variety of views absolutely irreconcilable? Yet he advances sophistries with the air of St. Paul bent on converting the world, and his insincerities never seem such at the moment; perhaps never to himself any more than to others.

Nor is this the contradiction in terms it may appear. The logician and the moralist are alike agreed in admitting that the constitution of the human mind is sufficiently complex to enable it to hold in solution at one and the same time two contrary opinions, each of which logically excludes the other. If either the logician or the moralist had any doubt on the subject, he would have none after he had listened awhile to Mr Gladstone, expounding yesterday with unanswerable force and cogency and the fervor of an entirely religious faith the proposition that black is black; and to-day proving with equal assurance of absolute infallibility that black is white. The Front Bench becomes a pulpit while these intellectual gymnastics are performed; the great Legislative Assembly is but a congregation of worshippers, and the great preacher not only soars into the empyrean but carries all his hearers with him.

Mr. Chamberlain has none of this spiritual or emotional power. He applies himself strictly to the business in hand. He is, above and before all things, a debater. His horizon does not extend beyond the strict limits of the subject with which he has to deal, but within those limits he is the equal of anybody. He has mastered it and he has mastered the secret of making his audience master it. He states his case with the most lucid precision. He demonstrates with geometrical accuracy the inaccuracy of his opponent. His sentences are models of luminous statement. The whole framework of his speech is put together with the solidity of an accomplished engineer. It is all iron and steel. There is not a weak spot in it. The parts fit perfectly together and not a rivet has been forgotten. When it comes to attack he is even better; he never misses the joint in his enemy's armor. He is perfectly cool and collected and imperturbable; the more he is interrupted the clearer grows his head, and the frequent interyals during which his voice is drowned by the howls of the Irish are employed in perfecting his argument or in fashioning the retort which will presently make them howl again in a different key.

The House likes above all things a debater. It puts the real debater in the front rank and the makers of set speeches in the second. At the very head are the few men who combine oratorical and debating power; Mr. Gladstone preeminently. Lord Randolph Churchill when he is at his best, Mr. Balfour rarely. Mr. Chamberlain often. I speak of the House as it is; reminiscences would take one too far, and if I once mentioned Mr. Bright I should have to construct a formula for him which would include no other. But I think Mr. Asquith ought to be added to the list. If there be a doubt, it is not from any lack of ability, but the infrequency of his speeches. Imaginative he is not; nor is Mr. Chamberlain, and the highest oratory requires the use of the imaginative power. It is useful even in debate; this it is which, combined and fused with what I can only call a spiritual exaltation, makes Mr. Gladstone's oratory in the House a thing apart.

There are two men who fall short of preeminence by reason of two contrary defects. Sir William Harcourt is master of a kind of speech which insures him attention and distinction. He is a debater who can touch every note except the one or two highest. He has point, quickness, aptness, wit, logical or illogical force at will, and he understands the House. The difficulty is that the House also understands him. It need not be said that he is insincere, but his sincerity, like Mr. Gladstone's, is versatile, and, unlike Mr. Gladstone's, lacks the sympathetic energy which, except in Mr. Gladstone, springs from a continuous consistency, and from that alone. The House likes a man to believe in something, even briefly, and it never knows what Sir William Harcourt believes, or whether he believes anything. No doubt he has convictions, but they are held subject to the necessities of the moment. He gives you the impression not of a man who is in earnest, but of one who is playing the game for all it is worth. If he has had a master and an ideal in public life, it is not Mr. Gladstone but Lord Beaconsfield, who never took the trouble to conceal his contempt for mere convictions, and for those who set store by them. Mr. Gladstone on the other hand is not merely in earnest, he is apostolic.

So is Mr. John Morley, whom I take to be the legislative antithesis to Sir William Harcourt. Mr. Morley's sincerity, earnestness, beliefs, convictions are beyond dispute. What is lacking to him as a debater is the power of imparting them to others. His failure is due to no lack of intellectual force or even of flexibility; a quality far more rare than force among Englishmen. He has flexibility of mind, but not of nature, and he has never quite caught the true House of Commons note. It is as if he would not submit himself to the conditions. He has never wholly shaken off the suspicion of bookishness which attached to him on his first entry into the House, now ten years ago. He was thought an amateur. He was and is a doctrinaire, and spite of his experience in the House and experience as administrator—for he has twice reigned over Ireland—honorable members look askance at him, as at one who still prefers, and will continue to prefer, the theoretical to the practical. Those who don't like him would use a harder word and call him visionary. A prejudice of this kind may be unreasonable, but nothing is so hard to live down as a prejudice; and perhaps it is all the harder because there is no trace of it in private life. You hear this speculative note in every speech; sometimes even in answers to questions when they do not happen to be written out for him by his subordinates in the Irish Office. He has not, any more than Sir William Harcourt has, and indeed far less than Sir William has, the ascendency as a debater which belongs to Mr. Chamberlain. G. W. S.

OLD AND FAMOUS WOMEN.

AN INTERESTING RECORD.

WOMEN WHO HAVE LIVED FAR BEYOND A CENTURY—A BEAUTY WHO REMAINED BEAUTIFUL—CUTTING NEW TEETH AT A VENERABLE AGE.

Statisticians who worship their long rows of figures and the stories which they tell, proved long ago that the average length of the life of woman is greater than that of man. More boys, it is equally true, are born than girls, but fewer of them reach the age of twenty years. There are approximately in the middle years of life the same number of men and women in the world; but many more women than men pass the Biblical limit as to age. Among Europeans who are entitled to speak with authority upon this and kindred subjects is Professor Ludwig Buechner, of Germany, whose recent work on "Die Dauer und Erhaltung des Lebens"—"The Length and Preservation of Life"—has attracted attention and favorable comment. The work contains, among other things, an interesting chapter upon women who have reached an advanced age and the methods adopted by some of them to preserve their strength and beauty.

Among the oldest women of modern times, according to the Professor, was the Countess Desmond, an Irish noblewoman, who died in the reign of James I., aged one-hundred-and-forty-five years, from the effects of a wound. When the summers of fivescore years had beat upon the countess's brow, she still found pleasure in dancing. Even five years before her "untimely" end she did not fear to undertake a journey from Bristol to London when certain money matters there required her attention. Still older than the Irish countess—who is reported to have cut her teeth three times—was, the Professor says, Mlle. Marie Prion, who died in St. Colombe, France, in 1838, at the reputed age of one-hundred-and-fifty-eight. During the last decade of her life she lived almost entirely on goat's milk and cheese. Although her body had shrunk so much that she only weighed forty-two pounds at the time of her death, she retained her mental acuteness to the last moment. Her skin looked like parchment. No similar case of longevity in France had been recorded for centuries.

Another woman worthy of special notice is Mrs. Marie Prescott, who lived in the County of Sussex, England. Although Mrs. Prescott only attained the comparatively youthful age of one-hundred-and-five years, it is recorded that she gave birth to thirty-seven children. A French dressmaker, Mlle. Marie Mallet, died a spinster, one-hundred-and-fifteen years old. She kept at her work until she was one-hundred-and-ten. She was followed to the grave by forty-five old women who had once been her pupils in needlework.

The Baroness Therese Fieder von Huelsenstein, who died in Prague, lived four years longer than the French dressmaker. She was born in Hamburg in 1757, and passed her youth in the house of the Countess Palffy, a lady-in-waiting of the Empress Maria Theresa. Later she became the wife of a French major. After his death she married an Austrian postoffice official, who, however, soon followed her first husband to the grave. The Baroness enjoyed perfect health until the end of her life. Even a few years before her death her features are said to have retained marks of their former beauty. Her voice, too, was pleasant to the ear.

In this connection Professor Buechner relates a number of instances of lasting beauty in the female sex. One of the most remarkable cases is that of the famous Paula de Viquier, of Toulouse, a contemporary of Petrarch. History says that she was one of the most beautiful women who ever lived. Whenever she appeared upon the street, it is recorded, she was surrounded by crowds of admirers. She was thus indirectly so often the cause of disturbances that the Toulouse Council issued a decree allowing her to appear in the public thoroughfares only when her face was veiled. She is said to have retained her beauty until her eightieth year.

Professor Buechner also mentions a number of women who began to renew their youth, so to speak, at the age when most people think of the trouble before them. A certain Marquise de Mirabeau, when eighty-six years old, cut a new set of teeth and grew a new head of beautiful hair, according to the records. A French nun, Margaret Verdies, when sixty-five years old, is said to have lost her wrinkles, regained her failing sight, and cut a new set of teeth. Ten years later she died, having the appearance of a comparatively young woman.

In the issue of the Paris "La Justice" of March 14, 1889, was the following paragraph: "There just died in Telfs, Tyrol, a woman, Margaret Lanthe, one-hundred-and-three years, eleven months and twelve days old. She retained her mental power until the last day of her life. No one could guess her age from her appearance. There were no wrinkles in the face and she read without glasses. Six years ago she cut a fine back tooth."

Another instance of female longevity is that of a soldier's widow, Irene Rudakoff, who died, according to records in Odessa, aged one-hundred-and-forty-eight years. There is an authentic record of the Viennese woman, Frau Anna Suda, who died in Vienna in 1878, aged one-hundred-and-eleven years, six months and five days. In 1873, as the Empress of Austria, after the "foot-washing ceremony," placed the white leather band with thirty pieces of silver about the old woman's neck, she said in a strong, steady voice: "I thank the most gracious Empress." In 1873 Frau Suda visited the exhibition in the Prater and examined the interesting things with great pleasure. Her health was excellent until the sickness which ended in her death. Another old Viennese woman was Magdalena Ponga, who died at the age of one-hundred-and-fifteen. She was known far and wide as "Vienna's oldest daughter." She was born five years before the death of the Empress Maria Theresa, and lived under six different rulers of Austria."

FRANCE'S SHOOTING SEASON

ITS OPENING WILL INTERFERE WITH THE GENERAL ELECTION—METHODS OF GALLIC SPORTSMEN.

Paris, August 9.

Great preparations are now being made for the shooting season, which opens during the present month. Instead of its beginning on the same day, however, throughout the entire country, the latter has been divided by the Minister of the Interior into three great zones, in one of which the season begins on August 13, the second on August 20, and the third on August 27. By referring to the almanac it will be seen that each of the dates falls upon a Sunday, that being the day chosen by most Frenchmen upon which to go shooting. France differs from most of the other countries in Europe in that very few of the great territorial magnates take the trouble of preserving game. Moreover, the bulk of the land is in the hands of small peasant proprietors, a fact which naturally prevents any preserving on a large scale. The consequence is that game is exceedingly scarce, although the sportsmen are perhaps more numerous than in any other country. Indeed, there is hardly a Frenchman who does not in the course of the season shoulder a gun and set forth to kill something. As a rule the contents of his game-bag are limited to rabbits, larks and perhaps a blackbird or two. Lucky, indeed, is he when he secures that much, and is not forced to purchase of some game-dealer or poulterer English pheasants, German partridges or Italian quail in order not to expose himself to ridicule when he returns to the bosom of his family.

The paucity of results does not in any way interfere with the magnificence of the equipment of the sportsman, and it is difficult to conceive a more entertaining spectacle than that presented by the appearance of the great railroad termini here on the evening of the Saturday preceding the opening day. Nowhere else is to be seen such an elaborate array of game-bags, guns, gigantic hunting knives, cartridge-belts, retrievers and costumes, the gaiters and the caps being particularly gorgeous. The conversation, too, is interlarded with all sorts of English sporting expressions and phraseology, which, owing to the peculiarity of the pronunciation, Americans would have some difficulty in recognizing or comprehending. The return on the Sunday evening is less triumphant than the departure, and the day's shooting frequently is brought to a close in some well-known restaurant here, the sportsmen taking advantage of the leave of absence accorded to them by their better halves to make the most of their liberty. It is the chasseur of the establishment who toward the early hours of morning is then sent off to our great markets to purchase the game, and at 6 or 7 o'clock the Nimrod reaches his home, according to his own account by the first morning train, completely exhausted by the fatigues of the chase, the partie fine at the Boulevard restaurant being kept a profound secret. It is prudent, however, for the sportsman to maintain amicable relations with his cook, since otherwise she is apt to draw the attention of her mistress to the fact that the game is either unreasonably high or else that there are no traces of shot, most of the foreign game that reaches the Parisian markets having been snared in traps and nets. Even a Frenchman, or rather, I should say, a Parisian, than whom there is no man more fertile in resource and more ready with an excuse, is apt to look nonplussed and embarrassed when, after expatiating at great length on the extraordinary manner in which he brought down the pheasant or the partridge or the rabbit, his wife suddenly appears in the room and interrupts him with the portentous remark that the cook finds it impossible either to pluck the bird or skin the bunny, owing to its advanced state of decomposition. The only Frenchmen who do not go in for shooting are the disciples of Izaak Walton, most of them retired shopkeepers, who throughout the summer, in rain or sunshine, line the banks of the Seine, not only above and below Paris, but even the embankment within the city limits, and who are perfectly content if a day of twelve hours' fishing enables them to return home with three or four minnows the size of a sardine.

It is to be feared that the opening of the shooting season will interfere with the attendance of voters at the polls, at any rate in those districts where the season begins on the 20th, the date fixed for the general election, or where it has already begun the week previously. In fact, the Government would have done better to have chosen another month for its appeal to the country than August. It is probable that the assurance possessed by the Administration of obtaining a large majority renders it indifferent to any considerations as regards time or opportunity. It is expected, indeed, that the Government, notwithstanding the Panama and other kindred scandals, will poll a larger vote than at any general election held since the overthrow of the Empire. The Monarchists seem doomed to almost entire disappearance. The Comte de Paris and his wealthy relatives appear indisposed to devote any more money to the propaganda of their cause, and a circular has been issued by their principal lieutenants here appealing for subscriptions from the public in order to meet the electoral expenses of the party. This appeal in itself is calculated to dampen any enthusiasm or fervor which the followers of the Comte de Paris may formerly have possessed, and it seems scarcely fair to ask them to devote their money to a cause in which he himself is no longer willing to risk a centime. Moreover, the somewhat shabby treatment accorded to the Duchesse d'Uzes, who devoted no less than 3,000,000 francs of her fortune to the furtherance of the Comte de Paris's pretensions at the time of his alliance with General Boulanger, is calculated to discourage people who might otherwise feel disposed to put their hands in their pockets in response to the circular letter bearing the well-known signatures of the Marquis Costa de Beauregard, of the Marquis d'Harcourt and of the Comte de Chevilly. The appeal concludes with the stereotyped announcement to the effect that "the smallest contributions will be thankfully received."

One by one the great ladies of the Napoleonic court are disappearing from view, the most recent death being that of the gentle old Comtesse de Brancion, who was the widow of a distinguished officer killed before Sebastopol, and who, after the loss of her husband, was appointed governess to the little Prince Imperial. Although the widow of Admiral Bruat was nominally the principal "Gouvernante des Enfants de France," yet it was the Comtesse de Brancion to whom the actual care of the child was intrusted, and up to her last days she was never tired of telling what a sweet-tempered, warm-hearted boy the ill fated son of Napoleon III had been. In connection with this it may be mentioned that Empress Eugenie, having consented to become the godmother of every French child born on the same day as her son, finds herself to-day responsible for the spiritual welfare of nearly 4,000 young Frenchmen and Frenchwomen, whose godmother she is, and who bear the name either of Eugene or of Eugenie.

It is so seldom that a young girl belonging to the great world here receives any royal decoration as a reward for merit that it is only right to place on record the name of the twenty-year-old Comtesse Emilie de Caraman, daughter of the late Prince Eugene de Caraman, on whom King Leopold of Belgium has just conferred the civic cross of the second class in recognition of a recent act of courage. The latter consisted in having torn off the flaming clothes of a woman named Beaumont, who had set fire to herself with a petroleum lamp, and in extinguishing the flames by rolling her in a carpet. Afterward, notwithstanding that the young countess herself sustained severe burns upon her hands and arms, she nursed and tended the woman until she had entirely recovered from her injuries. The Comtesse Emilie is well known here, although her permanent home is in Brussels. She has spent so much time at the house of her cousin, the charming Comtesse de Greffuhle, and is related to so many of the oldest families of the Faubourg St. Germain, that she is universally regarded as a Parisienne. The decoration is worn round the neck, and it was King Leopold himself who invested her with it at the close of the solemn Te Deum sung the other day in commemoration of the foundation of the Belgian monarchy.

The bicycling mania here continues to increase, and among its latest developments is the bicycle wedding. One of these ceremonies took place the day before yesterday, when the bride, the bridegroom, the bridesmaids, best men and guests rode to a church at Montmartre on bicycles, and after the conclusion of the service pedalled out to the suburbs of Enghein, where the wedding breakfast was served. It was only a few weeks ago that tout Paris assembled to see a party of actresses, tastefully attired in high boots and knickerbockers, urging their machines at a fiery speed. The prize was won by a Mlle. St. Sauveur, who had until then been known to fame as a circus rider. But the laurels of this young lady have not been allowed to wither on her brow. Mlle. Debatz, emulous of her celebrity, has just ridden a distance of seventeen miles in an hour, thereby establishing a bicycle record for ladies and raising herself to the pinnacle of glory.

The first remarriage under the Naquet divorce law has just taken place here. A year ago M. Aulard, who is a professor of history at the Sorbonne, was divorced from a charming young wife, who had borne him several children. Last week he married the lady a second time at the Town Hall of Clatten, one of the Parisian suburbs. In doing this M. and Mme. Aulard have set a good example. There are a large number of divorced couples who take advantage of the fact that the Catholic Church does not recognize divorce to resume relations as husband and wife without going through any legal form, on the ground that, having been once married by the Church, they still continue in that condition, notwithstanding the decree granted by the civil courts. A peculiar feature in connection with divorces here is the relatively large number of couples who, after having gone through the trouble and expense of securing a judicial dissolution of matrimonial bonds, become reconciled. The reason for this is not difficult to find, and, paradoxical though it may appear, is one of the results of the facility with which divorces are obtained. As long as the matrimonial bonds were indissoluble married life was made up of mutual concessions and reciprocal forbearance, the parties being aware that they were bound to each other for the remainder of their days. Now, however, they know that freedom may be obtained almost for the asking, and the consequence is that ruptures take place on often the most frivolous pretext, and as the result of a momentary fit of ill temper.

The presence of one of the Cabinet Ministers at the inauguration of the statue of Bayard, the Chevalier sans peur et sans reproche, at Mezieres last week is not altogether so surprising as might appear at first sight, when the dying words of that most popular and chivalrous of all French heroes are recalled to mind. When Bourbon expressed his sorrow at the impending death of his foe, he replied: "Pity is not for me, who die a true man in the service of my country; pity is rather for you, who fight against your fatherland and your oath." Of course the Republican papers have not been slow to draw popular attention to the chief of the House of Bourbon of the present day, who, unmindful of the oath of allegiance to the Republic which he took on his return to France in 1871, and again when he accepted a commission of colonel in the territorial or reserve forces of the Republican Army, now has for several years been devoting his money and his efforts to the overthrow of the Government as now constituted.

One of the last entertainments given here was the dinner of the Princess de Brancovan at her house in the Avenue Hoche, between the Park Monceau and the Champs Elysees. Some of the rooms of this house remind one of a harem because of their gilding, low divans, embroidered cushions and strong perfume. Most curious is the gallery of the hospodars, where sleep in their frames all the ancestors of the late Prince de Brancovan. On all sides are carved oaken stalls brought from Wallachia by the Prince, and above the stalls is a row of warriors who have reigned over Wallachia and Rumania. The late Prince was a son of the last Hospodar of Wallachia, and his mother was the last of the Brancovans. By decree of the Emperor of Austria he was permitted to take his mother's name and title. The Princess, his widow, is an Oriental, the daughter of Musurus Pacha, who, although a Christian, represented the Sublime Porte for so many years at the Court of St. James. As a musician the Princess has no superior, and when at the piano she appears inspired. Her collection of jewels is unrivalled in Paris. Her two favorite gems are a pair of enormous rubies surrounded with diamonds. These have been in the possession of the Brancovans for centuries, and the Princess is never seen without them. Fond of society, supremely elegant and singularly beautiful, not a painter has succeeded in fixing the expression of her face upon canvas. Grace, art and poetry are absent; the woman herself, indeed, is wanting. The famous sculptor d'Epinay has tried to reproduce her features in marble, but, great as is his talent, the result was unsatisfactory, marble being too cold to interpret the sweet expression of her mobile face.

A QUEEN IN EXILE.

From The St. James's Budget.

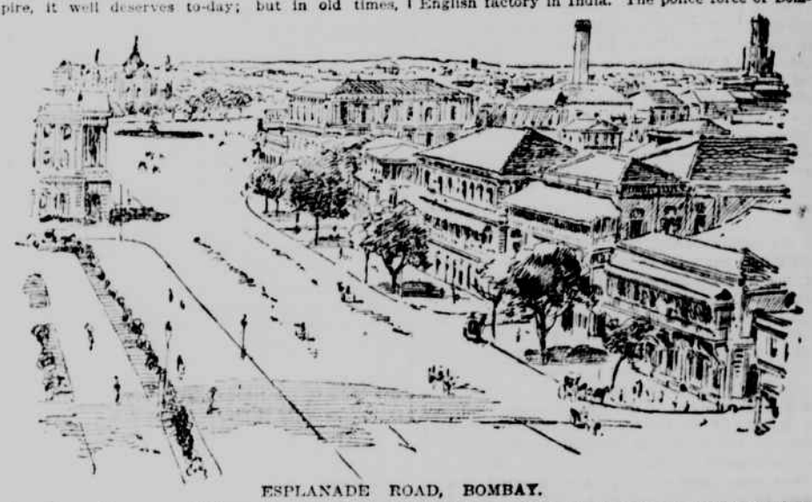
The ex-Queen of Naples, according to her annual custom, has just taken up her residence at the Hotel du Pavillon, Boulogne-sur-Mer, where she will spend a month or five weeks. Her Majesty, who was once a horsewoman as bold and dashing as her sister, the Empress of Austria, now finds her great delight in spending the whole day in an open boat upon the sea; and as she insists on going out regardless of the weather, her visits are a source of fearful joy to the Boulogne mariners, who are pleased enough to pick up a few twenty-franc pieces, but hardly share Queen Maria's contempt of life. It used to be no light task to pilot the Empress Elizabeth across a stiff hunting country, but the risks were trifling compared with those incurred by those who take part in her sister's aquatic recreations.

BOMBAY-MAHIMA.

THE BIRTHPLACE OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE IN INDIA.

A CITY BEAUTIFUL FOR SITUATION—THE MEETING-PLACE OF FOUR GREAT RELIGIONS—THE CHIEF PORT OF ALL INDIA.

The scene of last week's bloody strife between Mahometans and Buddhists is the oldest in England's Indian holdings, and probably, outside of Europe and the United States, the most splendid city in the world. Its very name is imposing. "Bombay" is a mere corruption of "Mumbai"; and that is equivalent to "Mahima," or Great Mother, a title of the goddess Devi. Such distinction, as the chief city of the world's most populous empire, it well deserves to-day; but in old times, when it was known as Kalliena, it was a place of little worth. The island, about the size of Manhattan Island, had not an inviting climate, and its salt soil produced nothing but rank grasses and groves of cocoanut palms. The harbor was a fine one, but ill appreciated, and Sandanes, sovereign of Barugaza, went so far as to prohibit the use of it for commerce.



ESPLANADE ROAD, BOMBAY.

The history of Bombay properly begins with 1530, when the Moguls ceded it to the Portuguese. It was then a minor place, but gave great promise for the future. England, therefore, was glad to get it from Portugal, as a part of the dowry of the Infanta Catherine when she became the wife of Charles the Second. In 1668 the Crown transferred it to the East India Company, for an annual rent of £10 in gold, and the terms of the bargain gave to that company the political authority which afterward enabled it to extend its sway over so much of Hindostan. The place has steadily grown in importance, both political and commercial, especially rapid progress being made during the War of the Rebellion in the United States, when it became the chief source of England's cotton supply. To-day it outranks even Calcutta itself, and stands in commercial importance easily first of all Indian cities.

It also stands first in beauty of situation and in excellence of harbor facilities. The approach to it from the sea discloses one of the finest panoramas

CLOCK TOWER AND PUBLIC BUILDINGS, BOMBAY.

in the world, rivalling and probably surpassing the famous Bay of Naples. The spacious harbor is studded with islands, whose rocky sides rise high above the blue water, while range on range of lofty mountains supply a background of indescribable sublimity. The harbor is secure and capacious, inviting an ingathering of the navies of the world. Nor is the city itself a gem unworthy of such a setting. There are, it is true, many narrow and squalid streets in the native quarter. But through the bulk of the native bazaar the houses are three or four stories high, with facades of great architectural beauty. Many of the streets in this quarter, and all of those in the European quarter are broad and well paved, and lined for miles with buildings rivalling the finest in Paris, London and New-York. In the mercantile quarter are palatial hotels and vast business blocks that would be conspicuous in Broadway or the Boulevards. The homes of the English and other European residents are in a region of their own, apart from the native and business quarters. Each house stands in a large garden, or compound, and the architecture and landscape gardening are singularly beautiful. A favorite suburban residence region is Malabar Hill, a high ridge running out into the sea. It is terraced to the top with handsome houses and commands a superb view of land and water. Adjoining this is Breach Candy, another delightful suburb, bordering upon the sea.

The public buildings of Bombay are of noble proportions, the great clock-tower rivalling that of the Parliament Houses at Westminster. The Crawford Market is one of the largest and finest in the world, a vast structure of iron and glass surrounding a gardened court. Hospitals, asylums, libraries, schools, colleges, fountains, monuments, and other public works abound, in size and excellence of appointment comparing well with any in the world. Many of these, of course, owe their origin to European residents, but by no means all. The bulk of them, perhaps, have been founded by the Persian colony, the Parsees, or Ghebers, who own a great part of the city, and to whose enterprise, thrift and high character the greatness of the place is largely due.

These Parsees, indeed, form the most striking feature of Bombay. They are but few, scarcely 7 per cent of the whole population, and they are in one sense aliens, the descendants of those faithful Zoroastrians who refused to accept the creed of Mahomet, and were in consequence exiled from their native Iran. One might almost call them the New-Englanders of India, for they came to Bombay in search of "freedom to worship God," and they have exhibited many of the traits that were conspicuous in the colonists of Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay. Surrounded by overwhelming hosts of Hindoos and Mahometans and ruled politically by Christian England, they have preserved their faith and form of worship intact. "Usefulness" is today, as in the days of Zerdusht, the keynote of their creed. Wherefore they show a diligence in business and a broad and general philanthropy that challenge the admiration of the world. Despite their eager keeping pace with the foremost modern progress, they cling to every detail of their ancient faith. Still in their temples they maintain their undying altar fires, and at morning and evening they salute the sun, as the source of light and fire and the best physical symbol of the One God whom alone they worship. Still, too, they maintain their Towers of Silence, on which the bodies of the dead are laid, to be resolved again into their elements. These are five round towers, each about twenty-five feet high, in a walled compound in the suburbs. Hither the funeral train comes, all clad in white. At the foot of the tower two attendants take the corpse from the bier and bear it to the summit, no other being allowed to follow. On an iron grating, at the summit of the tower, the corpse is laid, naked, and quickly becomes the prey of vultures. The bones fall through the grating into a well below. The attendants are carefully gloved, and scrupulously avoid contact with the corpse, and after performing each melancholy duty, they bathe themselves and destroy the clothing they had worn. Like the embalmers of ancient Egypt, they form a class, or caste, apart from the rest of the community.

Here, then, in this imperial city, meet the adherents of four of the greatest religions the world has known, whose numbers, curiously, range in inverse ratio to their political, social and industrial importance. Scarcely 5 per cent of the people in Bombay are Christians, yet they dominate the city and the empire. Less than 7 per cent are Parsees, and they rank second in all the elements of power. About 22 per cent are Mahometans, who lag far behind the Iranians, who were once the playthings of their conquering might. And nearly 64 per cent are Hindoos, who seem hopelessly distanced in the race for supremacy by all their rivals. The total population of the city is about 800,000. It is the greatest cotton mart of the East, both in manufactures and in commerce; and as a shipping port and railway terminus, it has outstripped Calcutta itself, and is to-day unrivalled in the Indian Empire.

Bombay is the capital city of the great Presidency of the same name, which has a population of nearly 30,000,000. It includes Kurrachee, Hyderbad, Shikarpur, Surat, Poona, Sholapur and other important districts, while among the great feudatory native States are Cutch, Khairpur and Kholapur. The important State of Baroda is adjacent to the Presidency, but is feudatory to the Calcutta Government. The city of Poona, with 130,000 inhabitants, is the summer capital of the Presidency, lying up on the hills, 119 miles southeast of Bombay. Ahmedabad, a place of similar size, was once a great capital and is still a splendid city. Surat, with now 115,000 inhabitants, was the chief port of India in Mogul days, and was the site of the first English factory in India. The police force of Bombay City, available for keeping the peace, numbers about 1,500, almost all natives. In the whole Presidency there are about 13,000 English and 27,000 native troops, under English command; and there are nearly 19,000 policemen scattered through the Presidency outside of the metropolis.

THE PEDLER IN POLITICS.

HIS PRICES WERE HIGH, SO HOLMES COUNTY WENT DEMOCRATIC.

There is nothing remarkable about Holmes County, Ohio, but its Democratic majority. Its other products are rocks, fireclay and a few scanty crops. The people are descendants of a colony of Mennonites, who took possession of the clay hills and creek bottoms nearly a century ago. A simple, unaffected race they are, living upon the crops which their industry wins from the stubborn soil, and having little to vary the monotony of their lives but election day. When Governor McKinley made his memorable tour of Ohio as a candidate for Congress for the second time he boldly invaded that stronghold of Democracy, "Old Holmes."

Now the people of "Old Holmes" liked the manly bearing and the fearless manner of the Governor, and the descendants of the Mennonites began to talk of voting for him. Then came the day of the "Holmes County Tin Peddlers." They were a race which went out of existence after that campaign.

The people there are moved to vote only when the question at issue involves an expenditure of money. For example, when the Democratic managers want to get out the full vote of "Old Holmes" for President, they circulate the report that the question at issue is whether or not a bridge shall be built, a culvert repaired, or something is to be done which calls for a drain upon the county treasury. The great subject for discussion at the time of the peddlers' visits was the protective tariff.

A band of shrewd men with a few tin buckets and pans on their shoulders made a tour of "Old Holmes." The prices for those articles of tin plate were placed by these political "fakirs" at an exorbitant rate. When the citizen of Holmes asked the reason of this tremendous advance in the price of milk pails and cake pans the tin-plate merchant would slip a finger in the man's buttonhole, take him aside, and recite to him a carefully memorized monologue upon the "robber tariff." That year "Old Holmes" gave her usual Democratic majority, and on the night of election the cry was heard, "McKinley defeated and three townships in 'Old Holmes' yet to be heard from."

A QUIET LENTEN WEDDING.

"Speaking of quiet weddings," said the rector of an Episcopal church in a New-Jersey suburban town the other day, "reminds me of a colored couple who had selected Washington's Birthday as their wedding day, and who wished to be married in my church. I was in a quandary, as the day came in Lent, and I did not care to have a wedding—especially in church—until after Easter. But all preparations were made, and I did not wish to spoil the plans of the young couple. After explaining these matters to the bridegroom, I said:

"'Now, Samuel, this must be a very quiet wedding.'

"'Oh, yes, Mr. C——,' said Samuel, 'it will be a very quiet weddin'; there won't be no shoutin'!'"

The rector stopped his story here, but the writer need not. The wedding took place, and was an important incident of the season, many of the colored people present, including the bride and bridegroom, being in full dress. A large reception followed and jollity reigned supreme, but there was no shouting.

A STATE SODA FOUNTAIN.

From The Astoria (Ore.) Budget.

It may sound like a Munchausen yarn, but it is an actual fact that in the squint-eyed little burg of Sodaville, in Linn County, in block No. 8 of the town plot, there is a soda spring, and that the last Legislature, in its infinite wisdom, provided that, "inasmuch as there is a great and growing demand on the part of the public for the waters of said spring," the State would spend $500 to improve it. This, at last, is the fond realization of the long felt want which has been loafing around the country like the ghost of boyhood's happy days in quest of a watermelon patch where haply lingered no vicious dog. It is a grand and imposing sight to see the legislative fancy rising from the sordid contemplation of a cold and unresponsive hog law and hovering on halcyon wings over the soft murmur of an idyllic State soda fountain.

HOW THE SENATORS SPEAK OF IT.

From The Washington Post.

It is interesting to note the way in which Senators refer to the silver act.

"I have here," they begin, "a petition from the blank Board of Trade of blank asking for the repeal of the——."

Here there is a long pause, a glance toward the senior Senator from Ohio in a depreciating sort of way, as though they wanted to avoid bruising any one's feelings, and then,

"The so-called Sherman act," with great stress upon the "so-called."

This little passage has occurred about fourscore times up to date, and it is always the same.